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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Young People's Half Hour Series

Ten Days in Switzerland

By H. B. Ridgaway, D. D.

New York:
Nelson & Phillips.
Cincinnati,
Hitchcock & Walden,
Sunday School Department.

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SUNDAY-SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

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TEN DAYS IN SWITZERLAND.

A STRONG desire (August 26, 1870) to push on and have as much time as possible among the mountains of Switzerland led us to take a through train from Freiburg, Germany, to Lucerne, stopping in Basle only long enough to make connections. Having an hour to wait, we drove from the station, over the Rhine, to the old part of the town, and had time for a glimpse at the Cathedral and the Museum. The Museum contains some very noted paintings: among them an original likeness of Erasmus, by Holbein; one of Luther, by Cranach; and also a picture of marvelous power—"Christ ready for the Tomb"—by Holbein.

The view of the city from the bridge, looking either way, but especially toward the west, is very satisfactory, giving an effect more peculiar than that of any other city we had yet seen. After some delay, our train started for Lucerne. Coming to the scene of the detention, we found two "goods" trains had collided at Bretten, and rendered the track impassable. Locomotives and cars were pitched together in awful confusion. As it is human nature to take a little comfort at other people's misfortunes, we felt a glum satisfaction that America wasn't the only country of railroad accidents. At Waldshut, south end of Baden, we were detained for three hours, and as we looked out

there seemed no compensation whatever for the inconvenience. But it is a rare spot in Europe, especially on the Continent, if something cannot be seen and learned within three hours that will render the time well spent. We found here a village such as we had met nowhere else, and seeing it, we had a type of the villages and towns of the Middle Ages, designed at once for residence and defense. In the form of a rectangle, with massive gates at both ends, and the houses fronting inward, face to face, with but one broad street, and drinking-fountains, etc., all were so constructed as to be shut in and to stand a siege from an opposing enemy. Just beyond the village there is a beautiful view of the Rhine. Ten o'clock at night brought us into the spacious station at Zurich, and a short drive to Hotel Baur au Lach, a superb house, situated immediately upon the lake, the waters dancing at its very foundations. This hotel is one of the most eligibly located, and one of the best in its appointments in all Switzerland.

The next morning we found the Rev. Mr. Achard, Pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, through whose attentions and those of the Rev. Mr. Eby, of the Canada Wesleyan Conference, who had been studying in Switzerland to prepare himself for the German and French work in Canada, we received every facility for a rapid and intelligent view of Zurich. First of all, but not least wonderful, the Methodist Mission Building was examined—a substantial property, with a large chapel and all the accommodations for the pastor, and a thorough-working Church. From the Polytechnic School, situated on a high hill, we had an admirable bird's-eye view of the city, Lake Zurich, and the adjacent mountains. The day was raw and cloudy, the horizon consequently circumscribed, and the feelings correspondingly chilled for out-door sight-seeing; but within doors we saw enough to have detained us days and

weeks with undiminished pleasure. Zurich, too, has its Cathedral—the scene, as Zurich Canton was the field, of Zwingle's triumphs. Near by is the house where the great Reformer lived. We did not enter it, but stood on the threshold where so often the most tolerant of all the Reformers was wont to go in and out. We descended to the Water Church, as it is called, from its being originally located on an island where three martyrs suffered. There we saw many old and rare treasures in statuary, painting, armor, manuscripts, books, glass, etc. A sort of Protestant shrine is this old church, with many things about it to make you feel you are battling over again for the faith of the Fathers. Two modern things here are well worth seeing—models of the Alps. These models, especially the larger one, are exact representations of the whole mountain and lake region, and, by studying them closely, this "world wonder" can be thoroughly understood and enjoyed. Before going through and after going through the Alps, one should see these *fac-similes*. The advantage of the most perfect object-teaching is thus obtained. The several mountains, passes, lakes, etc., are indelibly fixed on the memory.

We had read of John Caspar Lavater till touched with a passion for the man, and so must, of all things, set eyes on St. Peter's and its parsonage. The old church, built first in 808, remodeled in 1765, will seat about two thousand persons, and is devoid of any architectural beauty or peculiarity. In the chancel, at one side, is a memorial tablet of Lavater, with a profile likeness by Pfenninger, and a tribute in Latin to the worth of the great preacher and poet. Across the narrow street, a little back, is the parsonage, a very respectable-looking house, and since 1800 held sacred by hosts of admirers as having been hallowed by the thoughts and piety of John and Anna Lava-

ter. The study is at the head of the first flight of stairs, and remains as it was when Lavater occupied it. It is finished in oak, ceiling low, windows narrow, but has an air of exquisite cosiness and neatness. The present occupant, H. Hirzel, Deacon of St. Peter's, received us very cordially, spoke of his interest in America, and said he expected to visit the Evangelical Alliance Conference in New York had it not been postponed. There were few men to whom the cause of evangelical Protestantism owed more in the last half of the eighteenth century than to Lavater. His sermons and addresses, both spoken and printed, and his poems, were an inspiration to preachers and people, and their influence still lives wherever the German tongue is known.

After lunch we took the train to Lucerne, abandoning the route by Righi, as the weather was too thick for ascending the mountains or enjoying the sail on the lakes. We had to forego a look at that island on to which William Tell sprang, and so escaped the Austrian tyrant, Gesler. Perhaps we thus avoided spoiling a boyish imagination. But as so many boyish dreams must inevitably vanish into disappointment as years roll away, may be it was as well to have this one undisturbed. We were sorry to miss the ascent of Righi and the magnificent panorama from its summit, and also the famous views to be had in gliding over the waters of Lakes Zurich and Lucerne; but we were so unfortunate as to have such bad weather as would have made the journey wholly useless.

The first object which arrested attention in the morning, at Lucerne, was a funeral procession, moving quietly up the street near the hotel to an adjoining Catholic church. The Canton of Lucerne is as decidedly Roman Catholic as is that of Zurich Protestant. A youth had died. The body was borne to the portico of the church; there, surrounded

by a circle of priests and mourners, a short prayer was uttered, it was sprinkled with holy water, and then borne away, while the whole company entered the church and mass was celebrated. From the site of the old church and its burial-ground, an eminence overlooking the lake, the scene that morning was to a stranger just coming to Switzerland in the heats of summer exceedingly vivid—around, the city, with its contrast of quaint odd-gabled houses and modern hotels; beneath, and stretching away, the waters of the lake, of deepest blue; and beyond, and towering aloft, the mountains enveloped with mist, which, like scarfs loosely worn by lovely maidens, half concealed their majestic brows, or, capped with the freshly-fallen snow of the night, reminded one of gray-headed old men looking down upon and smiling among a group of sportive youths. We saw the lion. This is *the* object in Lucerne: Thorwaldsen's great lion, carved, as the guide-book says, in the "living rock." It is a monument to the Swiss Guards of Louis XVI., who were massacred at Paris on August 10, 1792. The lion is of colossal size, and is represented as dying amid weapons and armorial bearings. The stretch of the paw, the aspect of the eyes, give the very death-struggle. The effect is heightened by the romantic surroundings—the deep projecting rocks and pool of water forming a sort of grotto, which imparts the solitary and awful feeling which associates itself with death.

In addition to the charms of scenery to detain us at Lucerne, what was our surprise to meet at the Schweizerhoff choice friends from New York, with whom we had last parted in London. They had come from Interlaken, whither we were going. To have lingered on the shores of the most beautiful of lakes with such company would indeed have been doubly agreeable; but time was our master and must be obeyed, and so we pushed forward on

our journey. We were able to engage one of the carriages, by which our friends had come, at reasonable rates, and consequently selected a private rather than a public conveyance. The ordinary stage route would have taken us by boat as far as Stansstad, and thence by *diligence* to Lake Brientz. We thought we would enjoy the lake more viewed from the shore, and in going over the Bruneg Pass would have better command of time and position in our own conveyance. Accordingly we set off behind two as sturdy and nimble-footed little white ponies as one could wish to see. Our driver was French, quiet and polite, ready to answer all questions and to oblige in every possible way. The road lay near the brink of the lake as far as Alpnacht, winding with every turn of the capricious waters, running under shelving rocks, and every foot smooth and firm as ingenuity and industry could make it. The rain-clouds, with occasional showers, were our only drawback. As we drove off, Mount Pilatus was full in sight on our right. On, on, to the right and to the left, one hour, two hours, a dozen miles away, and to the question, "Driver, what mountain is that?" "Old Pilatus." Nothing is more deceiving than the distances of great mountains. As we were late in starting, it was soon time, as the Yankees say, to "bait" our horses. What was our wonder and amazement to see the driver cut up for them two veritable loaves of bread. Baked bread for horses! The theory was, it is less heating, more quickly digested, better for rapid travel than grain.

We began now to get fully among the mountains, and into the heart of real Swiss scenery, not only in the topography of the country, but also in the general aspects of peasant life. A slender valley, between towering mountains, whose sides were covered with verdure and tops with mist and snow—snug little cottages grouped in villages by

the roadside, or perched hither and yon on some slope or peak, formed the prevailing outline. The Swiss cottage is larger as it ascends from the ground—usually gable to the front—the lower story mostly for animals, the projections forming a shelter for them, the roof being kept down, in addition to fastenings, by huge stones. Sometimes they have pretty carvings about the doors or cornices, but are seldom painted. The abundance of flax seen around shows that home manufactures for clothing are common. Along the road, up and down the mountain sides, men, women, and children—mostly women—may be seen carrying burdens in or on a peculiar sort of deep basket or bucket adjusted to the back. Water, wood, grain, hay, are thus borne. Sometimes a woman at a little distance will look like a huge hay-shock. The children become burden-bearers as soon as they are able to work at all; hence the people are great climbers, capable of going up and down vast heights with little or no fatigue. The women, however, show the sad effects. While the men are tolerably good looking, and the children quite beautiful, the women, despite their picturesque bodices and mutton-leg sleeves and universal tidiness, are wretchedly ugly. The shepherds' cots, pitched aloft on crags like crows' nests, are exceedingly pleasing. There the shepherds with their flocks spend the summer, descending to the valleys in the autumn. Cheese is a staple production of the region.

At Lungern, where the ascent to the Pass first becomes decidedly steep, we dined and rested. We were late, but got a good meal. It is not uncommon for a hundred guests to dine there any day. Lungern lake, like a little beauty, lay quietly nestled near by our hotel. Just as our horses had got into the walk up the mountain it was discovered an umbrella had been left behind; the driver instantly ran back and we rode on. He was a long time overtaking us.

The Pass was desolate enough, with nothing civilized looking but the road, as up and around like a serpent it wound, so that thoughts of robbers, spirits, and awful desolations began to plague the minds of some of us. A poor stroller that chanced to meet us looked as though he might be ready for any plunder. The voice of our *couchér* ahead, at the brow of the Pass, was a welcome sound; by a near cut he had got beyond us. Our fears were gone, our laborious ascent over; and now the descent, with its locks and whirls, was eagerly anticipated and as richly enjoyed. Down we glided, turning short curves, rounding deep chasms, and dashing athwart rushing cataracts, without alarm, for by this time we had all confidence in driver, beasts, vehicle, and ourselves. Experience and exhilaration had made us brave. Never can the scene be forgotten as the valley of Meyringen stretched out beneath us. Like bridal vails, innumerable cascades fell from the lofty heights over against us, gracefully waving, dropping, and dissolving upon the rocks; the river Aar shot along in its silvery course, confined by artificial banks, until lost in the Lake of Brienz; and the lake itself glistened like a sea of glass. The whole effect was heightened by one of those turns of good fortune which often come to the traveler. All day our joy had been dampened by the clouds and the rain. At the very nick of time, as the sun was nearly down and we had come to the best part of our ride, he burst out in all his splendor, shooting golden lances up the valley and over mountain and lake, which created a picture such as no poet or painter could depict.

Arrived at the little village of Brienz, noted for its manufactures in wooden fancy articles, we had to do as all travelers do, examine every thing and buy—something. The temptation to purchase these little cunning wares is

well-nigh irresistible; the sooner, however, resistance is learned the better. A good rule is, buy only what you can carry along with you. Night was now closing about us, so we were obliged to hasten on without visiting Geissback Falls. These falls, although very trifling as to volume of water, are rendered exceedingly beautiful at night by a system of artificial illumination. It was Saturday evening, and we could not pause. Through the darkness we found our way into Interlaken, and, amid the noise and spray of playing fountains, were landed at the Hotel du Belvidere, where, by good luck, the house was not crowded, and we obtained eligible front rooms from which we could anticipate a full and early view of "Jungfrau," the great attraction of the locality.

The next morning was cool and clear, cool enough for a fire; but the transparent air compensated for all inconveniences. The first look upon rising was for the Young Bride, the beautiful mountain which lay directly opposite our window; and there she was, far away to be sure, but distinct in her loveliness, capped with snow, suffused with rosy tints, quietly and grandly resting between the Schynige-platte on one side and the Morgenberg on the other, these covered with green, and others forming fitting side curtains or columnar supports for the blushing beauty. Although photographs had rendered the view quite familiar, yet familiarity in no sense subtracted from the pleasure of the scene when actually gazed upon. It was not surprising that the spot from which such a wonder of nature could be enjoyed should have been selected from time immemorial as a place of resort; that upon it the monks of olden time, with an eye ever to the beautiful, and also those seeking the entertainment of the public, should have fastened. This immediate plateau is not over a mile in length, if so long, and is covered with fine hotels, capable

of accommodating two thousand visitors, perhaps; hotels which for excellence are equal to any in Europe.

Interlaken, or Interlachen, as the name signifies, lies on a flat between Lakes Brienz and Thun, through which the Aar flows, and was once very unhealthy, but by successful drainage has become as healthful as it is beautiful. It has no importance except as a summer resort. Centrally located, it is a good point to engage guides, hacks, mules, etc., for the Bernese Oberland. Here connections can be made in all directions. It is also a favorite place to stay for rest, as its surroundings are tranquillizing, and, within short distances, afford all sorts of agreeable diversions. So soon as breakfast was over, we found near by, in a room of the old castle, Protestant worship. We were glad to join the group of devout believers. The sermon was by a clergyman of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, who had been detailed to this chapel for one month. The very best ministers are thus selected, who spend the whole or part of their vacation in supplying these chapels for the summer season. It is a good plan, and one which might well be imitated in America, at least at some of our watering-places, where the population cannot support regular ministrations. How grateful is God's holy day in a strange land! how grateful the opportunity of worshiping in one's own tongue, and listening to divine truth from lips which speak familiar words! That little congregation, gathered from every corner where English is spoken, though of divers creeds, felt themselves to be one in Christ Jesus, and realized in a measure the preciousness of that common faith which separates all believers from the world and constitutes them the family of God. The one broad avenue during the afternoon was thronged with the people of the place in their quaint costumes, and with visitors leisurely strolling or riding hither and thither. The walk by the banks of

the Aar, also to a new hotel on an eminence opposite overlooking the valley, seemed to be much taken.

On Monday we drove to the Grindelwald Glaciers. Entering the valley of Lütschine, our course lay up toward Lauterbrunnen. Our time would not admit of visiting both Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald, and so, where the roads fork, we had to give up seeing the Staubbach Falls, a ribbon-like cascade of immense height, and turning to the left, pursued our way amid the overhanging rocks, with the Jungfrau, Wetterhorn, and other great mountains constantly in sight, until we reached the little hotel at Grindelwald. In passing we were importuned to purchase all sorts of articles and inferior fruits. We were, however, quite entertained by an Alpine horn. A man blew a huge long horn which rested upon the ground. Its blasts were not very musical; but the echoes were numerous and pleasing as one by one, and then confusedly blending, they came floating back from distant gorges. The lower glacier was quite a distance from the hotel, too far and too difficult for most American ladies to walk, so one of our ladies took a horse, and the other, as she was too timid to ride and unable to walk, concluded to remain at the hotel. Around we went by the mule-path, when, reaching the little shanty at the mouth of the glacier, out popped our other lady. She had outwitted us. Hiring two men with a chair supported on long handles, she had by a near cut reached the spot before us. In the grotto, hewed into the solid, eternal ice at great depth, we found a woman with lighted tapers, and making between her voice and a queer instrument music which anywhere else than in an ice mountain would have been ordinary enough, but which here was really charming, and which helped to heighten the fairy-like effect of the whole scene. After a substantial dinner we returned rapidly to Interlaken, and were soon

off by Lake Thun *en route* for Berne. It stormed severely while we were on the lake, and was dark when we reached Berne. In pleasant weather this is a very enjoyable journey, but to be caught in a storm on one of these illy-contrived lake steamers is any thing but agreeable. In nothing is America ahead of Europe more than its steamboats.

Berne is situated on an elbow of the Aar, is a handsome city built of freestone, noted as the capital of the Swiss Republic, and for its arcades, museums, and *bears*. But time with us was inexorable; we could not stop to see even the "bears," and took an early train for Lausanne, intending to go thence by boat directly to Geneva. It was hard to pass through Freiburg and not stop to listen to its world-famed organ; it was harder still not to stop at Lausanne, lying so exquisitely on Lake Geneva, and see among other noted places the house in which Gibbon wrote his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. They who have but ten days to spend in Swiss land, and that, too, in a year of European war, must consent to take but a hasty glance at what might fill weeks of close observation. A sudden notion struck us, as we reached Lausanne, to take train up the lake as far as Vevay. Here we hired a hack and drove to Clarens. The road from Lausanne was along the edge of the lake, through pleasant villages and by continuous vineyards, which overhung and studded the precipitous or gently sloping hills. The hills were regularly terraced, in some instances the soil seeming only a bed of pulverized rocks. The best grapes grow in these barren places, with a hot southern exposure. The precious fruit was ripening, and abundant harvests were expected. The markets of Geneva were abundantly supplied with qualities of great sweetness at the low price of a few centimes a pound. A much frequented route to Chamouni is directly on by this

road as far as Martigny. From Martigny the ascent is made to Great St. Bernard, and also by carriage and mules around to Chamouni. This would have been our way had not one of our ladies been unable to ride horseback. We stopped at Clarens, but could not go so far even as the Castle of Chillon, rendered famous by the sojourn of Lord Byron and the verses he wrote about it and its traditions; and so, making the best of our opportunities, we took steamer for Geneva. Clarens is a great resort for English and American families, many preferring its situation and climate to any thing in Europe, especially in the winter season. We felt a tender sadness in pressing its soil at the recollection that here so recently had died our cultured and devout friend, the Rev. Archibald C. Foss. All the way from New York, located here with his family for physical and intellectual improvement, it pleased God to deny his earthly hopes, and to take him to a realm of purer air and richer beauty than exists even on the shores of this wondrous lake.

Nothing could have been more delightful than our sail down the lake. The steamer was large enough and swift enough to satisfy us. She cut the water like a thing of life. The water, so blue and clear, lent a charm to every thing. This was the realization of a dream far back in boyhood, when Lake Geneva, with its vine-clad hills, its brilliant skies, its distant mountains, its boats with their picturesque crews and quaint triangular sails, waters of azure, and villages of roofs and spires, seemed to childish imagination just the acme of terrestrial glory. The actual did not disappoint us. How I longed for one look at the town of Nyon, the birth-place of the saintly Fletcher. Diviner thoughts by far would have been recalled than to have seen the house where the infidel Gibbon meditated his brilliant periods, or the castle where the libidinous Byron

penned his passionate verses. Methodism owes a debt to the shores of this lake which it cannot pay until its pure and simple faith shall have sounded, as it is doing in Zurich and a few other places, all through this land, and the people of John de la Flechere shall have heard its glad tidings. By night we landed on the quay of Geneva, and found comfortable lodgings at the Hotel des Burges, directly on the lake and immediately on a line with Rousseau's Island and the superb bridge of Mont Blanc, stretching with its rows of bright lamps to the farther shore.

Geneva is not only the largest, but also the handsomest city in Switzerland. Indeed, we can hardly conceive of a handsomer city in the world. Brussels approaches it; the two have points of resemblance, and recall each other; but for variety of scenery and elegance and general effect, of all places give us Geneva. No wonder it is a point of universal attraction. Fortunate it is for political exiles that its government grants them an asylum; fit town it is for evangelical alliances, peace congresses, and conventions of arbitration. No set of men could sustain a chronic quarrel if they would allow themselves to be affected by its surroundings. Why, a feeling of reconciliation with every body and every thing, and yourself too, comes right over you; one only bad result of which is, your pocket is apt to suffer—you wish to be buying and giving all the time. Well, what of its beauty? The lake and the river Rhone divides it in two. The waters retain all their blueness and purity, pass very swiftly, and give out as they flow a perpetual rippling sound; and while they are beautiful by day, at night, under the quiet moonbeams and the hundreds of brilliant gaslights, with the noise of geese and swans, the effect is greatly heightened. Crossing at various points are bridges, some of which are specimens of the finest architecture. On all clear days mountains covered

with snow can be seen, and on some days, in certain positions, Mont Blanc can be distinctly discerned with the naked eye. The environs are rolling without being too precipitous, and the houses in the new parts of the town are well and tastefully built. One object of interest is to the south of the town, where the Arve and the Rhone flow together. Alighting within the grounds of a goodly chateau, we were conducted by a youthful guide to a point whence could be seen to greatest advantage the confluence of the rivers. The Rhone, rising in the Canton of Valais, not far from the sources of the Rhine, has made its way from the Furca Pass, about 5,904 feet above the level of the sea, until it has emptied into Lake Geneva at its eastern extremity. Hitherto a muddy mountain stream, its color and quantity changed and augmented by its passage through the lake, it now issues from the lake in great purity and volume, and just here, a mile and a half below the town, is met by the Arve, which, descending through Savoy from the glaciers of Chamouni, is a dirty, yellowish stream ; and as the two join, their waters flow side by side, preserving their distinct colors for some time, until at last the turbid Arve conquers, and henceforth the Rhone rolls on its course of three hundred and sixty-five miles, a muddy river, till it is lost far away in the great Mediterranean. We remembered a year before to have heard Mr. Punshon use this very scene as descriptive of the meeting of the great forces of the world and Christianity ; and as the waters of the one subdued the waters of the other, he said, so shall the Christian religion change into its own nature the things of this world. Another illustration occurred to us. That junction was the first meeting of a youth with the stream of worldly temptations. Heretofore pure in his principles and habits, he struggles hard for independence ; but sooner or later yielding to the power of evil, he is overborne by wicked-

ness, and henceforth, corrupted in character, he continues in sin until his life is whelmed in the ocean of eternity.

The ride thence to the south-eastern part of the city is the most entertaining. A short distance is Ferney, where Voltaire resided. What was a villa of a few houses has now grown to a large village. The room which the great author occupied is still shown as he left it. A mighty genius; but his work was destructive. The symbol of another genius more amiable and less destructive was just in front of our hotel, on the Isle du Rhone, the monument of Rousseau. But it is to the shrine of Calvin that the Protestant traveler turns with true reverence. Almost the first object we sought was old St. Pierre, the Cathedral, which was the cradle of the Reformation, and the scene of John Calvin's preaching and triumphs. It is supposed to have been built as early as the tenth century, stands surrounded by very narrow streets and dingy buildings, is surmounted by three towers, on one of which is a musical clock, and is in the form of a Greek cross. The original Gothic portal was replaced in 1749 by a modern Corinthian front. There are no objects of interest within except the tomb of Theodere Agrippa D'Aubigné, a warrior and learned theologian, friend of Henry IV. of France, and the original pulpit in which Calvin preached. Not far from here we found a gallery in which were two remarkable pictures: the one a Visit of Farel to Calvin in 1564—Farel then extremely old and Calvin dying, but the Reformation accomplished; the other Antoine Fromment Preaching in the Fish-market, by Molard. When Farel had been expelled from Geneva, Fromment kept alive the flame he had kindled. This is a painting of graphic power. Noblemen, ladies, fishmongers, laborers, children in one confused mass, listening with distended eyes, gritting teeth, and clinched fists, or wondering and question-

ing to the earnest words of the Reformer. Those were times when the fate of individuals and of nations hung upon single sermons. Close by, at 8 Rue Egnard, in a lower flat of a handsome freestone house, was the residence of Merle D'Aubigné, the historian of the Reformation. Through the politeness of the lady in charge, we saw his apartments, parlors, library, sitting and bedroom. The rooms were commodious, neatly but simply furnished. The books were not overabundant. On the wall hung an old portrait of his great ancestor with these words inscribed in Latin: "I would rather rule in a corner of France than have crowns with the Pope's feet on my head." D'Aubigné himself was away at Mornay Montagne, his country residence. The lady assured us if we could call on him he would receive us very kindly, as he was deeply interested in America. She spoke most highly of the great man's habits of personal devotion and zeal. The Russian Greek Chapel, on Promenade di St. Antoine, is a curious and rich building, with its four gilt turrets glittering in the sunshine. We did not visit Calvin's grave or schools. The shops and markets attracted us not a little: on the delicious grapes we feasted, and were successfully tempted to an investment in jewelry and music boxes.

Shall we attempt Chamouni? was the recurring question. Three days at least must be given to it, and up to this time, August 31st, we did not know by what route we should return to London. To go back through Paris would give us a little more time, and to go around the way we came, by Cologne and Brussels, would hardly admit of a further stay in Geneva. But Paris was on the verge of revolution. What to do perplexed us. At last, make or break, we will see the Valley of Chamouni and Mont Blanc. We had sacrificed many cherished objects; this we would not deny ourselves. Accordingly,

early on the morning of the first of September we mounted the *banquette* of one of the regular *diligences*, and amid the cracking of whips were off toward the fair vale. A few miles from the city the road enters Savoy and follows the valley of the Arve. The scenery is not highly picturesque until you reach Bonneville, where it becomes narrower and wilder. The face of the valley is undulating and under fair cultivation. Fruit trees abound, but, if possible, beggars are more abundant. The coach is ever and anon infested with these beings, who, stretching forth poor fruit or poorer flowers, clamor for your sous. Along this route the first cases of goiter and cretinism came distinctly under our notice. Pitiable it was to behold these miserable, half-witted creatures, with their swollen necks, exhibiting their wretchedness as a plea for alms! This disease is peculiar to high mountainous regions; but we should prefer not to regard its causes as wholly atmospheric. Abuses arising from an extremely low pauper condition must have much to do with its continuance and aggravation. This ride, as also the one over the Bruneg Pass, possesses great interest for the geologist. The stratified rocks rise like huge walls as you drive, in some places looking almost like the work of human design. At St. Martin and Sallenches the great mountains came full in view. There they stood, like mighty sentinels, in solitary whiteness, shining in the noonday rays with almost dazzling brightness. The *diligence* stopped at the St. Gervais baths, where, after dining, the company were transferred to hacks for the ascent of the Pass. This was an agreeable change from the old lumbering stage-coach. Nothing could exceed the smoothness of the road over the mountain. It was remarked, "Here you see, as you look at that old road down there so rough and steep, and then at this, so smooth and easy in its grade, the work of Napoleon." And

sure enough, as we approached a tunnel finely cut and arched, over its entrance was "Napoleon III., 1855." Napoleon may have misgoverned France, but he made good roads.

Our first sight of the famed valley, as we emerged into it, disappointed us, it was so much smaller than we had supposed. It lies in a direction from north-east to south-east, is about twelve miles long and from one to six wide, thinly populated, and not very productive. It looks the smaller for the immense height of the surrounding mountains, and is all the more wonderful for size, verdure, and beauty when its position in the heart of this waste of mountains and snow is considered. We obtained the best rooms at the Hotel d'Angleterre, looking toward Mont Blanc. We walked out and took our stand in the burial-ground of an old Catholic church, whence we gazed and gazed till sundown up at these greatest of the Alpine ranges. Here is a quotation from our note-book, made on the spot, beneath a hasty outline of the contour of the mountains: "Six o'clock P. M. One of the most magnificent sights possible. The atmosphere perfectly clear; the sun gone down back of the opposite mountain, and here, in the valley, I look up to these mountains clad in everlasting snow. Around a sweet rural scene—flowers blooming, fruits ripening, the bells of sheep and cattle tinkling. R. and L. have just gone to the hotel, and I go too. Sorry to leave the spot. Saw the last rays of the setting sun fall on Mont Blanc at ten minutes to seven o'clock: beautiful roseate tints; moon a quarter full above." We seemed to feel as we sat beneath the jagged peaks, so near and so far, with such an awful quiet all around, as though in God's mightiest Gothic cathedral, where our only worship could be the "silent awe which dares not move." Yet it was impossible to realize the vastness of these mountains because of

their very nearness. Like the greatest events, they must be seen at a distance for their magnitude to be fully appreciated.

We were favored the next morning with another clear day; and now our preparations were quickly made for the tour to the great glacier, Mere de Glace. But one of the ladies could go, and so we set off on mules, with a guide, to see this great wonder. From the high points, as we ascended, the real beauty of the valley could be seen—a line of emerald it seemed, with here and there streaks and dots of silver. The great glacier is said to be fifteen miles long and of variable width. We crossed it, and returned without descending the Mauvais Pass on the other side, as accounts we had heard at the hotel of its peril had rather intimidated us. To explore these glaciers in their whole extent is a difficult and dangerous feat. Almost every season parties are lost. Just before we arrived a young bride, separated for a few minutes from her husband and his guide in the ascent to Mont Blanc, induced her guide, though against the chief guide's caution, to explore a little way, when, in the attempt to follow, she slipped through a crevice, fell, and was never again heard from. Our trip up and back occupied about six hours, and was well worth all our pains and aches. That night was spent in sauntering among the shops of the village examining the strange curiosities wrought in wood and stone. A cane and a few set stones of real beauty was all we could take away.

Another lovely day dawned, affording a magnificent sunrise over Mont Blanc, and a bracing, clear air for traveling. We took our departure early by the same line we had come. Having spoken for the front *banquette*, we had it finally to our heart's content. When about two thirds of the way to Geneva a driving rain-storm overtook us. The guard, who should have looked

after our comfort, ensconced himself on the inside of the coach and left the travelers to take care of themselves. The wind blew furiously, the rain fell in sheets, and the lightning at times was well-nigh blinding. Away went our umbrella, stripped from its stock like dry leaves in autumn. We all got very wet, and were in a wretched plight when we arrived at the hotel in Geneva. Through the kind services of servants we were soon rendered comfortable. We congratulated ourselves on the superb weather we had been favored with to visit Chamouni.

The morning found us well, and prepared to relish a Sabbath in the city of Calvin. It had escaped us that there would be service in English at St. Pierre, so we did not go to church till the hour for native worship. M. Birt preached a sermon in French. He is a tall, handsome man, with a powerful and well-modulated voice; his action not excessive, and expressive. He followed the uniform Continental method and used no notes. It was communion day. After M. Birt had read the service he and three other aged ministers, all in black gowns, who sat opposite the pulpit on elevated chairs at one end of the transept, descended and went inside the altar under the great window. The elements having been previously prepared, they took them, consecrated them, and distributed them among themselves. Then standing, the four in a row, with the elements in their hands, the congregation advanced two by two, dividing to the right and to the left, while a precentor led the people in some familiar tunes accompanied by the organ. The men all communed first, and afterward the women. It was a great privilege thus to be allowed to commune with the followers of John Calvin in this great source and center of their and his power. A month before some of our party had communed at City Road Chapel, the

fountain of Wesleyan Arminianism, and now we had enjoyed the same gracious benefit in the Church of Calvin. How slight did party names and theological formulas appear as thus, at the Master's own table, we were permitted to imbibe that deeper spirit of love which is the true bond of unity among all believers. A story is told that once a company had started on a sail over this same beautiful lake of Geneva. The morning had not yet dawned, and one by one they were admiring the stars and selecting their favorites; and while yet descanting on their several and separate peculiarities, lo! the sun himself arose in golden beams over the mountain tops, when the stars faded out of sight and all were equally wrapped in the glory of the sun. So it is with our Luthers, Calvins, Wesleys: they do well to entertain us until our Christ and Saviour appears; before his name and his person all names and all persons sink into obscurity. That evening was one of intense excitement in Geneva, as indeed it was in Paris, Berlin, London, and New York. The report was flashed to us—"Sedan has fallen; the Emperor Napoleon is a prisoner." Thrones were falling; all Europe quaking; but how to get to London was the grave question with us poor innocents. Paris has declared for a Republic—Marseilles—Bordeaux—such were the rumors.

Monday morning came, September 5th; no more tarrying was admissible; we had barely time to reach Liverpool for the day of sailing if we had to return by the Rhine. "But France is a Republic, and a Committee of Safety is appointed. We are Americans; Republican France must respect us; we go to Paris." And we did. As the train glided away, and old Mont Blanc faded from sight, we said, Farewell most beautiful of lands—the fountain of coolness, of fertilization, of moisture, of beauty, and political bravery to all Continental Europe!

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